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House Assassinations

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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

WASHINGTON (AP) - FORMER HOUSE ASSASSINATIONS COUNSEL RICHARD A. SPRAGUE TODAY QUOTED JAMES EARL RAY AS SAYING OTHER PEOPLE WERE INVOLVED IN A CONSPIRACY IN WHICH MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS ASSASSINATED.

SPRAGUE ALSO SAID HE HAS CONCLUDED FROM RAY'S STATEMENTS THAT ''RAOUL;'' A MAN RAY HAS CLAIMED ENLISTED HIM IN A GUN-RUNNING OPERATION THAT PUT HIM IN MEMPHIS WHEN KING WAS KILLED; IS A FICTITIOUS NAME.

RAY; WHO PLEADED GUILTY TO KING'S MURDER AND IS SERVING A 99-YEAR SENTENCE; HAS CONTENDED THAT THE OPERATION DIRECTED BY ''RAOUL'' HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH KING; SO FAR AS HE KNEW.

RAY CONTENDS HE PURCHASED THE RIFLE THAT POLICE BELIEVE WAS USED TO KILL KING BUT HANDED IT TO ''RAOUL'' AND LEFT THE AREA SHORTLY BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION.

SPRAGUE ALSO SAID SOME FEDERAL INVESTIGATORS BELIEVE THE MAN THE CIA RECORDED CONTACTING SOVIET AND CUBAN EMBASSIES IN MEXICO CITY BEFORE PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY WAS ASSASSINATED WAS NOT LEE HARVEY OSWALD.

SPRAGUE SAID HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THE HOUSE ASSASSINATIONS COMMITTEE CAN CONDUCT A PROPER INVESTIGATION OF THE TWO ASSASSINATIONS AND SAID HE DOUBTS IT EVEN WANTS TO.

HE SAID A SPECIAL PROSECUTOR SHOULD BE SET UP WITH AN INDEPENDENT STAFF TO INVESTIGATE THE ASSASSINATIONS; WITHOUT THE PRESSURE HE SAID THE HOUSE COMMITTEE STAFF WAS UNDER TO PRODUCE SOMETHING SENSATIONAL.

SPRAGUE SAID HE BELIEVES THE COMMITTEE WAS SET UP BEFORE THE ELECTION TO APPEAL TO BLACK VOTERS UNHAPPY WITH INADEQUATE INVESTIGATION OF THE KING ASSASSINATION. HE SAID THE PANEL WAS ESTABLISHED WITH THE IDEA THAT IT MIGHT BE SCRAPPED AFTER THE ELECTION.

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[illegible]

SPRAGUE HAS BECOME AN ISSUE BECAUSE MANY CONGRESSMEN RESENTED WHAT THEY SAW AS HIS MISUSE OF A POST THAT FORCED FORMER CHAIRMAN [illegible] GONZALEZ (D-TEX.) TO RESIGN.

SPRAGUE QUOTED RAY AS SAYING IN THE TWO INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY COMMITTEE INVESTIGATORS THAT PEOPLE OTHER THAN MEMBERS OF RAY'S FAMILY HELPED HIM OBTAIN A WEAPON TO ESCAPE FROM A MISSOURI PRISON BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION.

RAY SAYS HE CONTACTED OTHER PEOPLE AFTER THE ASSASSINATION; AND THAT OTHER PEOPLE HELPED HIM TO ESCAPE TO CANADA; WHERE HE TRAVELED BEFORE HE WENT TO GREAT BRITAIN; WHERE HE WAS ARRESTED.

RAY HAS NOT YET DESCRIBED THE OTHER PEOPLE EXCEPT TO SAY THEY ARE NOT HIS BROTHERS; SPRAGUE SAID. THE INVESTIGATOR SAID IT HAS BECOME CLEAR PARTLY THROUGH RAY'S OWN COMMENTS AND PARTLY THROUGH WHAT THE INVESTIGATORS COULD PERCEIVE THEMSELVES THAT THE NAME ''RAOUL'' IS MADE UP.

SPRAGUE SAID THAT NAME WAS MADE UP BY SOMEONE ELSE AND RAY RELUCTANTLY USED IT.

IN THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION INVESTIGATION; SPRAGUE SAID; FBI INVESTIGATORS DOUBT THAT THE VOICE THE CIA RECORDED CONTACTING THE SOVIET AND CUBAN EMBASSIES IN MEXICO CITY BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION IS THAT OF OSWALD.

SPRAGUE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT IT WOULD MEAN IF; IN FACT; THE VOICE THE CIA SAID WAS THAT OF OSWALD WAS NOT OSWALD. THE WARREN COMMISSION CONCLUDED THAT OSWALD ASSASSINATED KENNEDY ACTING ALONE.

''THERE WELL COULD HAVE BEEN A CONSPIRACY THAT AROSE AFTER THE ASSASSINATION; THAT CERTAIN AGENCIES FELT IT WOULD BE AN EMBARRASSMENT TO DISCLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OSWALD;'' SPRAGUE SAID. ''I DON'T KNOW.''

HE SAID THAT CIA TAPE-RECORDINGS OF THE MAN WHO CONTACTED THE SOVIET AND CUBAN EMBASSIES WERE ERASED BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION TO BE USED TO RECORD SOMETHING ELSE.

BUT HE SAID PEOPLE WHO HEARD THEM AND KNEW OSWALD'S VOICE SAY THE MAN RECORDED WAS NOT OSWALD.

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